

Awards Honor Orange County Volunteers

At the Pauli Murray awards, Weaver Street Market was the first area business to be honored for public service.

By LISA CRIST
Staff Writer

The Orange County Human Relations Commission rewarded local efforts to encourage diversity and uphold humanitarian principles, in a ceremony held Sunday.

The annual award, named for civil and women's rights activist Pauli Murray, recognizes Orange County residents who have served their community and have actively pursued ideals such as equality, justice and human rights.

In the adult category, the award went to Hillsborough resident Aubrey Chris Nutter for her efforts in the Orange County Social Services. Nutter, one of the founders of the Friends of the Department of Social Services, is active in the lives of many children, involving them in Orange County 4-H Club and dairy shows as well as serving as a mentor for local students.

At the reception, held at A.L. Stanback Middle School in Hillsborough, Nutter said she was humbled to be a recipient and stressed the importance of volunteering within the community.

"There are a lot of opportunities in Orange County to volunteer in the human services arena," Nutter said. "For those of you who volunteer, pass it on to the young people you meet and to your own children."

The award also acknowledged the efforts of a local teen in a youth category.

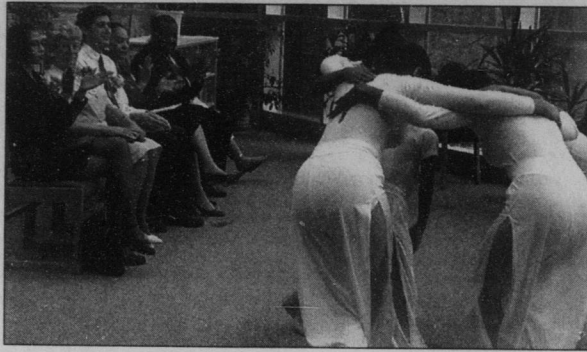
This year, the commission recognized Danielle Price, a junior at Orange High School, for her involvement in local organizations including the Orange County Commission for Women, the Orange County Department on Aging and Orange Congregations in Mission.

Price, in her acceptance speech, thanked her family and acknowledged her motivations for reaching out to the community.

"It's not about being paid for doing something, but just the feeling of doing something for someone else," she said. "It was an honor to be associated with (Pauli Murray's) life and legacy."

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DANIELLE PRICE
Murray Award Winner



Area dancers perform for recipients of the Pauli Murray Awards, annual honors given in the memory of a local black activist.

In addition to these two categories, the commission added a third award, recognizing the efforts of a local business to encourage diversity in the work force and contribute to positive human relations within the community.

The Weaver Street Market, a co-op grocery store located at 301 West Main St. in Carrboro, was the first business ever recognized in the award's eight-year history.

Orange County Board of Commissioners Chairman Moses Carey Jr., who nominated the market for the award, cited several reasons for his decision.

He said the market emphasized diversity in the community, helped support programs at local schools and helped raise money to provide college scholarships for high school students.

Cat Moleski, media specialist and chairwoman of the board for Weaver

Street Market, said the business was dedicated to fostering diversity.

"We received the award because of our support of diversity in the community and in the workplace," she said. "We make a point in hiring non-English speaking employees and educate our management in learning Spanish."

James Watts, who accepted the award on behalf of the market, said Carrboro provided a great deal of diversity.

"We are a current reflection of life in Carrboro," he said. "We are very proud to be a part of Orange County. There are a lot of other deserving businesses out there, and we feel privileged to be in (such a) community."

Sabine Hirschauer contributed to this article.
The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

Annual Prizes Recall Local Activist's Legacy

By NISHANT GARG
Staff Writer

As a crusading civil rights activist, feminist, lawyer, writer, poet and member of the clergy, Pauli Murray wore several hats during her time as a pioneer in the struggle for freedom and equality.

In an attempt to recognize contributions of local businesses that promote diversity, the Orange County Human Relations Commission chose to highlight Murray's achievements by using her namesake for a local award.

Anna Pauline Murray was born Nov. 20, 1910, in Baltimore and moved to Durham when she was 3.

After graduating from Hunter College in New York in 1933, she made an attempt to enroll as a graduate student at UNC, but was denied entrance because the University did not accept black students until 1955.

Donald G. Mathews, a UNC professor of American social history, said he thought Murray's exclusion was unjustifiable. "The action was based on a segregated mentality that refused to accept peoples of races other than that of the founders into the law school," Mathews said. "I am sure the admissions committee never gave her a second thought. I

wish the University could have braved racism and segregation - but it didn't." Upon receiving her master's degree from Howard University, Murray sought enrollment into Harvard Law School in 1944 but was denied admission on the basis of her sex.

Murray went on to earn a master's degree in law at the University of California-Berkeley and then received her doctorate at Yale University.

"I entered law school preoccupied with the racial struggle and single-mindedly bent upon becoming a civil rights lawyer, but I graduated an unabashed feminist as well," Murray stated in "Black Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia."

Murray recorded her life experiences in two laudable books. She wrote an autobiography, "Song in a Weary Throat," and "Proud Shoes: The Story of an American Family."

Genna Rae McNeil, UNC professor of African-American history, said, "Proud Shoes" is a book that every U.S. citizen seeking to understand race, racism, identity and culture in the United States ought to read."

In the 1970s, Murray played a leading role in the formation of the National Organization for Women.

After attending the General Theological Seminary in New York, Murray became the first black woman to be ordained an Episcopal priest in 1977. Murray died July 8, 1985, in Pittsburgh, having lived a full life that continues to be recognized today.



Civil rights activist Pauli Murray is honored by Orange County each year by humanitarian awards in her name.

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

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